

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 11488

STATE FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SHLAUDEMANN

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OEXC, PINR, PE
SUBJ: IVP GRANT

REF: STATE 302790

1. PROFESSOR GALL IS HIGHLY REGARDED IN THIS EMBASSY FOR HIS SCHOLARLY WORK ON ANDEAN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC THEMES, AND WE HAVE CAREFULLY WEIGHED HIS SUGGESTION OF AN IVP GRANT FOR ISMAEL FRIAS. FRIAS IS INDEED A BRILLIANT, IF SOMEWHAT CHAMELEONIC, FIGURE IN PERUVIAN JOURNALISM, BUT WE DO NOT PLAN TO PROPOSE FRIAS FOR AN IV GRANT AT THIS TIME. OUR FY-77 GRANTS ARE EXTREMELY LIMITED AND ALREADY COMMITTED FOR HIGHER-PRIORITY PEOPLE.

2. FRIAS, A DECLARED SOCIALIST, WAS AN ADVOCATE OF TAKE-OVER BY THE GOP OF THE LARGER PERUVIAN NEWSPAPERS AND OF THEIR "TRANSFER TO THE SOCIAL SECTORS". SHORTLY AFTER THIS OCCURED IN JULY 1974, FRIAS WAS NAMED DIRECTOR OF THE DAILY ULTIMA HORA. HE WAS EVENTUALLY DROPPED FROM THAT POSITION, LARGELY WE BELIEVE AS THE RESULT OF A RUNNING FEUD HE HAD WITH PRESIDENT VELASCO'S PRESS SECRETARY AUGUSTO ZIMMERMAN. HE LATER BECAME DIRECTOR OF EQUIS-X, AN INDEPENDENT WEEKLY, UNTIL ITS CLOSURE BY THE MORALES BERMUDEZ GOVERNMENT IN
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JULY 1976 ALONG WITH OTHER INDEPENDENT WEEKLIES. AN IVP GRANT TO FRIAS WOULD PROBABLY BE VIEWED WITH DISPLEASURE BY THE GOP, BUT THIS FACT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE THE BASIS OF OUR DECISION.

3. THE UNCERTAIN SITUATION OF THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA HAS BEEN

EMPHASIZED BY TWO RECENT EVENTS: PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ' SOMEWHAT DEFENSIVE RESPONSES TO A QUESTION FROM A JOURNALIST IN CARACAS ON THE PRESS SITUATION IN PERU, AND THE MUCH-PUBLICIZED RESIGNATION OF ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION CREATED IN SEPTEMBER TO STUDY CURRENT PRESS LEGISLATION, WHO CITED THE GOP'S UNWILLINGNESS TO TAKE THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS SERIOUSLY AS THE REASON FOR HIS RESIGNATION.

4. IN VIEW OF PROFESSOR GALL'S INTEREST IN FRIAS, WE WILL REEXAMINE THE SITUATION AND THE POSSIBILITY OF HIS CONSIDERATION FOR AN IVP GRANT IN FY-1978.
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